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MINUTES

15 January 2026

Minutes of the Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 15 January 2026 in the Great Easton Village Hall.

Present:

Councillors

Cllr T Martens (Chairman), Cllr J Stevens (Vice-chair), Cllr J England, Cllr D Hahn and Cllr J Heath.

Clerk: Kate Rixson

3 members of the public attended including District Councillor Richard Haynes. District and County Councillor Martin Foley was unable to attend and had sent apologies and a written report.

	The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00 pm
01.26.01	Apologies for absence Cllrs Benterman, Hurst and Neale were unable to attend and sent apologies. The reasons for absence were accepted by resolution.
01.26.02	Declarations of Interest None.
01.26.03	Minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 27 November 2025 were approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the chairman.
01.26.04	Public participation session No questions were raised.
01.26.05	District and County Councillors' reports Cllr Foley and Cllr Haynes were thanked for their reports which had been circulated to councillors. Cllr Haynes reported on progress on the Local Plan (consultation with residents had ended on 11 January 2026). It could, pending adoption by the district council, be given some weight in planning decisions. In his view the previous 2005 plan gave the countryside more protection from unsuitable development. Stansted Airport's application to increase passenger numbers by about 2040 to 51 million passengers per year had been approved by the Planning Committee of UDC on 17 December although Cllr Haynes had continued to argue against this in committee and had received some press attention for his views. The government's decision on reorganization of local government to create 3,4 or 5 unitary authorities to cover Essex and abolish the district, city and county councils, should be made soon. Cllr Haynes reported that the district council's procedures for repairing its housing stock had been reviewed and might be changed shortly.

01.26.06	<p>Reports from Chair and councillors</p> <p>Great Easton beacon: It was reported that the beacon had been taken down and was lying in the field near the car park fence. The Parks Working Group had advised that it could be put up in a new position in the Great Easton Playing Field without causing any nuisance or creating risks for neighbouring land.</p> <p>Parking near Tilty church: Cllr Stevens would arrange a meeting of local residents to consider what steps might be taken to resolve this. Action: Cllr Stevens</p> <p>Digital Essex/improving mobile phone service: Cllr Martens reported on a very useful meeting on 15 January 2-26 with senior people at the county council (Digital Essex team) and a company wishing to install a new mobile phone mast. The company had established that the mobile phone signal in Great Easton and Duton Hill was one of the weakest in the country and wished to discuss possible sites for a mast with local residents. Their aim was to place a new mast well away from any houses but in a position where the parishes would receive a good 5G signal. A meeting with the company and residents would be important as the company would need planning permission for a new mast and would not proceed without community support. The company would wait to hear from the council and/or landowners wishing to put forward sites. It seemed unlikely that any land in the ownership of the parish council would be suitable as it was generally low-lying and it is generally the hills and ridges surrounding the villages that block the signal.</p> <p>The parish council had been asked to suggest possible sites for consideration by the company's engineers. It was noted that a previous application had been made some years ago but the outcome was not clear. The clerk would make enquiries with Uttlesford. Action: Clerk</p> <p>Any suggestions for sites from the community or councillors should be put forward via the clerk/chairman. Action: All</p>
01.26.07	<p>Clerk's report on items not listed separately on the agenda, and correspondence</p> <p>This item was deferred.</p>
01.26.08	<p>Neighbourhood Plan – report and decisions</p> <p>The Chair, Gary Hutchings, reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The responses to the housing needs survey were being analysed and would be reported as soon as possible • The housing needs survey (a paper copy to fill in) would be delivered to every resident within the next 2 or 3 weeks. The completed surveys would be returned direct to the Rural Community Council of Essex. The responses would be the evidence underpinning the Neighbourhood Plan so it was very important that everyone filled in the survey. There would be publicity about this at the time the survey was being handed out.
01.26.09	<p>Parish Council Financial Reports</p> <p>Councillors noted receipts of £58,720.84 and payments of £49,531.74 up to 31 December 2025.</p> <p>Councillors noted that the balance in the cash book matched the bank account balance of £53,425.79 on 31 December 2025. It was noted that this included £5,300 earmarked reserves for the Burns Playing Field biodiversity project, £1,000 having been spent on the survey.</p> <p>Actual spending and income 9 months into the financial year was compared with the budget and it was noted that these were approximately in line.</p>
01.26.10	<p>Consideration of requesting designation of The Swan public house, Great Easton, as an Asset of Community Value</p> <p>The chair of the Great Easton Community Association was asked to address the council. He explained that GECA wished an application to be made as the pub was as important to the village as was the Village Hall. They would like the support of the parish council, whether in making the application or in supporting GECA's application. It was noted that as a community organisation whose members included at least 21 registered electors from the local area, GECA was able to apply for designation of the pub and would be eligible to make a community bid to buy if the pub was designated and was then put up for sale. GECA would be discussing the terms of an application to designate at its meeting on 20 January and considering how a community bid could be put together in due course.</p> <p>After discussion of the proposal and a previous application UTT/21/2870/ACV which the council had made (refused November 2021) the council agreed to support an application made by GECA.</p>

01.26.11	<p>To consider the budget and precept for 2026-27 The chairman advised that new figures affecting the budget had recently been obtained and the finance working group would be meeting to discuss these before making a recommendation to the council. He therefore proposed an Extraordinary Council meeting for Wednesday 21 January in the function room of the Three Horseshoes, Duton Hill. The council approved this unanimously. Action: Finance Working Group, Clerk</p>																												
01.26.12	<p>Appointment of new Proper Officer as service administrator on the bank accounts with TSB, Unity Trust Bank and CCLA It was noted that these accounts included those in the name of the parish council as trustee for the Great Easton Parish Hall Fund. The council approved this unanimously. Action: Clerk</p>																												
01.26.13	<p>To adopt a Data and IT policy in the form of the NALC model The draft had been circulated and made available on the council's website. It was unanimously approved without amendment. It would be added to the website. Action: Clerk</p>																												
01.26.14	<p>Financial Decisions The following decisions were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A donation to the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust of £100. The council expressed appreciation of the importance of the air ambulance service to the parish, as a rural area 30 miles from the nearest A and E department. Action: Clerk • Payment of £89 in total for replacing the worn-out Union flag with a new one measuring 1 yard by 2 yards. The council had previously approved up to £45 for a replacement but the flag that had been purchased was too small and would be returned for a credit against the larger one. Action: Clerk 																												
01.26.15	<p>To consider work to improve the Burns Playing Field and Rivershed It was agreed that no decisions could be made regarding improvements to the field until the ecology report was received and/or the ecologists' views known. This was therefore deferred. It was agreed that a group of volunteers would meet some time in February to work on the Rivershed.</p>																												
01.26.16	<p>Dates for the Annual Parish Council meeting and the Annual Meeting of the parish of Great Easton It was noted that the parish of Tilty would be holding its Annual Parish Meeting separately as it remained a separate civil parish but that the parish of Great Easton should also hold a meeting of electors between 1 March and 1 June. It was agreed provisionally that the Annual Parish Council meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting of Great Easton would be held on 21 May 2026. This would be confirmed in due course. Action: Clerk</p>																												
01.26.17	<p>Planning applications, decisions and progress on planning matters It was noted that there were no applications currently open for consultation. It was reported that the following decisions had been made:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>25/2348/FUL</td> <td>Land at Radley's End</td> <td>2 houses</td> <td>refused</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 2674 LB</td> <td>Gigaclear equipment installn</td> <td>Little Gerrans, Andrews Farm</td> <td>refused</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 3015</td> <td>demolish+new house</td> <td>Woodlands, Grange Grn</td> <td>withdrawn</td> </tr> </table> <p>The following applications had not yet been decided but the consultation period had ended:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>25 3095 FUL</td> <td>1 new selfbuild</td> <td>Orchard View,Gallows Grn Rd CM6 3QS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25 3312 HHF</td> <td>Replace flat roof with pitched on outbuilding</td> <td>The Sparrows Duck St CM6 2HL</td> </tr> </table> <p>The following appeals to the Planning Inspectorate had been decided or were still outstanding:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>25/00017/ENFNOT</td> <td>The Dairy, Grange Gn</td> <td>against enforcement notice</td> <td>in progress</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25/00058/REF (25/1086 refused)</td> <td>Woodlands, Grange Gn</td> <td>one dwelling</td> <td>dismissed</td> </tr> </table>			25/2348/FUL	Land at Radley's End	2 houses	refused	25 2674 LB	Gigaclear equipment installn	Little Gerrans, Andrews Farm	refused	25 3015	demolish+new house	Woodlands, Grange Grn	withdrawn	25 3095 FUL	1 new selfbuild	Orchard View,Gallows Grn Rd CM6 3QS	25 3312 HHF	Replace flat roof with pitched on outbuilding	The Sparrows Duck St CM6 2HL	25/00017/ENFNOT	The Dairy, Grange Gn	against enforcement notice	in progress	25/00058/REF (25/1086 refused)	Woodlands, Grange Gn	one dwelling	dismissed
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01.26.18	<p>Representatives reported as follows on items not shown separately on the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open spaces including playing fields/play areas and trees – the Parks Working Group’s report on play equipment on both playing fields had been circulated. • Footpaths, road safety and highways – there had been work done on the pavement from the primary school to Duton Hill this week, and it was hoped the path would have vegetation cut back to provide more space for pedestrians. <p>The drain cover near the junction of the lane from Tilty and the lower road (Dunmow Road) had been missing for two years and covered with a temporary emergency cover. Highways appeared to have worked on this site today. Cllr Foley was thanked for his persistence in pressing Highways on this matter, and a local resident’s family member was thanked for reporting the matter and monitoring it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River interests – no issues to report • Airport – the recent planning application to increase passenger numbers had been passed by the UDC planning committee on 17 December. • Community activities and events – Great Easton Community Association was offering an evening with Colin Sutton in January and a quiz had been fixed for 28 February. An Easter Egg hunt was being arranged. • Easton AFC – no issues to report. • IT, website, social media, and communications – see chair’s report above concerning the proposed new phone signal mast. Cllr Martens would speak to local landowners and co-ordinate a response to Atlas Towers Group.
01.26.19	<p>Items for inclusion on next meeting’s agenda or in the Five Parishes Magazine</p> <p>See above for future agenda items.</p>
01.26.20	<p>The date and time of the next meeting</p> <p>Extraordinary meeting on 21 January 2026 to approve budget and set budget, in the function room at the Three Horseshoes.</p> <p>The next ordinary meeting would be on Thursday 26 March 2026 at 7pm. The venue would be decided shortly and added to the notice and agenda.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.</p>